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SUBJECT: DEMARCHE DELIVERED: SEEKING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT  
FOR AMISOM AND THE SOMALIA SECURITY SECTOR

REF: STATE 24665

¶1. (SBU) We delivered reftel demarche on March 20 to MFA section chief for Somalia Valeriy Shibeko, who said that Russia shared the U.S. hope that the election of Sheikh Sharif as President of the TFG offered an opportunity for progress, but cautioned against being overly optimistic as Somalia was still a long way from stability. He cited the fact that not all opposition groups had entered into talks with the TFG, and that armed factions and warlords were still active as the cause for continued concern. Moreover, AMISOM has only established security in Mogadishu.

¶2. (SBU) Shibeko took note of the U.S. aid contributions to Somalia and AMISOM, then reminded us that the GOR had donated \$1 million in 2008 to the World Food Program to supply flour to Somalia and provided scholarships to Somali students to study in Russia. He could not specify any future aid that the GOR might provide to Somalia or AMISOM.

¶3. (SBU) Stating that it was Russian policy to take part in all UN peacekeeping operations in Africa, Shibeko told us that Russia was likely to contribute resources to the UN peacekeeping operation slated to take over from AMISOM later this year. Even though this entailed the African Union troops already in Somalia simply changing to blue helmets, the fact that this would become a UN operation would provide an opportunity for Russian participation. Shibeko thought it possible that Russia would provide helicopters to the Somalia mission, as it was already doing in Darfur.

BEYRLE